

**HEALTH AND WELL-BEING BOARD
28 SEPTEMBER 2021****Engagement approach – mental wellbeing and Joint Health
and Wellbeing Strategy Consultation**

Board Sponsor

Councillor Karen May, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Health and Well-being

Author

Dr Kathryn Cobain, Director of Public Health
Elizabeth Griffiths, Public Health Consultant

(Please click below
then on down arrow)

Priorities

Mental health & well-being

Yes

Being Active

No

Reducing harm from Alcohol

No

Other (specify below)

Safeguarding

Impact on Safeguarding Children

No

If yes please give details

Impact on Safeguarding Adults

No

If yes please give details

Item for Decision, Consideration or Information

Decision

Recommendation

1. **The Health and Well-being Board is asked to:**
 - a) **endorse and support the proposed year long conversation on mental wellbeing;**
 - b) **approve the revised timetable for the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) implementation; and**
 - c) **in light of the above, approve a short-term extension to the existing JHWS.**

Background

2. In February 2021 the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) agreed to focus on “prevention” and in particular the inequalities as a result of, and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. A number of potential system-wide themes were presented to the HWB at its meeting in March 2021. These themes were then considered against

a prioritisation matrix based upon the ability to address inequalities and to embed prevention and asset-based approaches.

3. The HWB formally agreed in June 2021 to focus on one overarching theme: “Better mental health and emotional wellbeing”, supported by healthy living at all stages in life, safe and healthy homes, and good jobs.

4. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, much of the development of this overarching theme was done by the HWB in virtual meetings. Whilst the theme was informed by engagement work carried out by Health Watch, Hereford and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust and other champions, the HWB has not yet had the opportunity to publicly engage on this priority.

5. In addition, it is recognised that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected each of the residents of Worcestershire in many varied and complex ways, with a range of short, medium and longer-term impacts. Whilst some of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are known, there are some that may be hidden or not yet understood.

6. To better understand these impacts, Public Health is now commissioning a range of qualitative COVID-19 impact focus groups run by a range of community providers, an in-depth ethnographic research study and is undertaking a detailed COVID-19 impact survey. This data collection exercise will be completed by the end of March 2022.

7. This detail, and evidence of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the wellbeing of Worcestershire’s residents will be used to inform the JHWS and supporting the development of its action plans.

System wide Mental Wellbeing engagement

8. There are a wide range of activities planned across the health and care system around mental health in the coming months, centring around World Mental Health Day, Sunday 10 October 2021. System partners have recognised the importance of co-ordinating this work and ensuring that messages are not diluted or saturated. There is work underway across communications and engagement teams to plan and align this activity.

9. Examples of planned mental health activity across the system include:

- a. The launch of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- b. ongoing promotion of the suicide prevention campaign running throughout September and October 2021;
- c. promotion of the ‘Now We’re Talking’ campaign; and
- d. engagement around the Integrated Wellbeing Offer.

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

10. The HWB is responsible for delivering a number of statutory duties including the requirement to produce a JHWS.

11. The HWB's current strategy, which sets the priority areas as mental health and wellbeing, being active and reducing harm from alcohol, expired in March 2021.

12. The new JHWS will be a 10-year strategy with progressive shorter term action plans / review points. This will enable ambitious, long-term goals for health improvement to be made, assets to be developed and a sustainable approach to reducing health inequalities.

13. It is suggested that rather than launching the JHWS consultation at a time where there will be heightened communications and engagement on a variety of mental health topics, the HWB use this opportunity to conduct a listening exercise and conversation with residents, working with wider system partners to address issues such as what is mental health and wellbeing and to explore the impact of COVID-19 on Worcestershire's populations.

14. The statutory, 12-week consultation on the strategy can then take place post-Christmas, running from January to March 2022. The findings of the consultation can be considered alongside Public Health's qualitative data collection on COVID-19 impact and the results of the communications and engagement activity across the system around mental health. These findings can then be used to inform the final JHWS and its action plans, with a view to the final JHWS being ready for adoption by the HWB in Summer 2022.

15. It is suggested that the JHWS launch is supported by planned communications and engagement around the findings of this programme of work. This will include detailed stories from the qualitative COVID-19 impact research, system mental health communications and engagement activities, and the formal consultation findings. It will also show where this feedback has informed the development of the HWB's JHWS and its action plans.

16. To ensure the HWB has an active JHWS in place for the duration, it is recommended that the HWB extend its existing JHWS until Summer 2022.

Proposed timetable

17. There will be a range of communications and engagement activity launching on World Mental Health Day. Communications and engagement teams across the system are working to co-ordinate this activity.

Indicative Date	Activity
10 October 2021	World Mental Health Day
10 October – December 2021	System wide communications and engagement around MH
November-February 2022	Public Health covid impact focus groups
November-March 2022	Public Health covid impact ethnographic study
January – March 2022	Statutory Consultation on Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
April-May 2022	Consideration of feedback received and development of final Strategy and Action plans
June – August 2022	Launch of Strategy and feedback on findings from Mental Health conversation and covid impact investigations.

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

18. There is a risk around the timing of the strategy process, informing district and partner strategies. At present, such organisations have been continuing strategy development without alignment to the JHWS.

19. In order to support the communications and engagement campaign for the JHWS strategy and the 'big conversation', funding has been approved to support the development of a small engagement team for which recruitment is underway.

Privacy Impact Assessment

20. There are no privacy issues to report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

21. The conversation approach will be designed with equality, diversity and inclusion in mind. Equality Relevance Screening will be completed for the statutory consultation and full Equality Impact Assessment completed if required.

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Worcestershire Hub: 01905 765765

Specific Contact Points for this report

Dr Kathryn Cobain, Director of Public health

Telephone: 01905 845863

Email: kcobain@worcestershire.gov.uk